

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed December 12, 2006. At the time of the Office Action, Claims 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 18-21 were pending in this Application. Claims 1, 4, 6-7, 10, 13, and 15-17, were previously cancelled without prejudice. Claims 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 18-21 were rejected. Applicant amends Claims 9, 14, and 18-20 and respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 2, 3, 5, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 21 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite and failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant amends Claims 9 and 14 as recommended in the Office Action to overcome these rejections and respectfully requests full allowance of Claims 2, 3, 5, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 21 as amended.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 8 and 18-20 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 1,235,926 issued to G.P. Roux ("Roux"). Applicant respectfully traverses and submits the cited art does not teach all of the elements of the claimed embodiment of the invention.

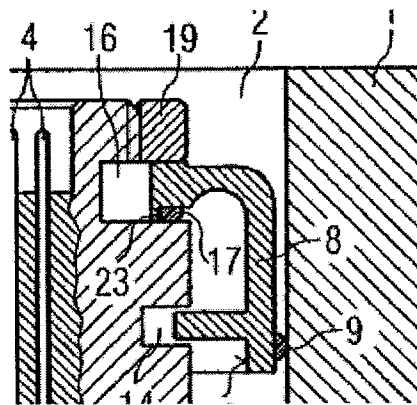
"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Furthermore, "the identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co. Ltd.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 U.S.P.Q.2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). Applicant respectfully submits that the cited art as anticipated by the Examiner cannot anticipate the rejected Claims, because the cited art does not show all the elements of the present Claims.

Claim 8 has been canceled and claim 18 amended to be in independent form. Further, claim 18 has been amended to further recite “wherein the limiting stop limits compression of the axial seal.” Thus, as amended, Claim 18 recites

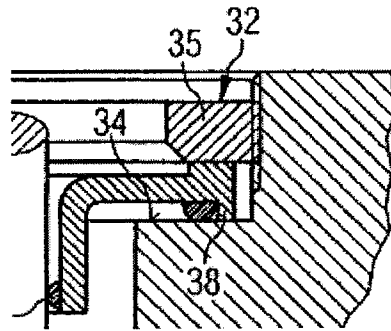
wherein the sealing body has one axial seal located in the recess and a further radial seal which mates with a surface which bounds the space between the connector body and the housing wall

wherein a limiting stop is formed on the sealing body in a position which lies within the recess, wherein the limiting stop limits compression of the axial seal.

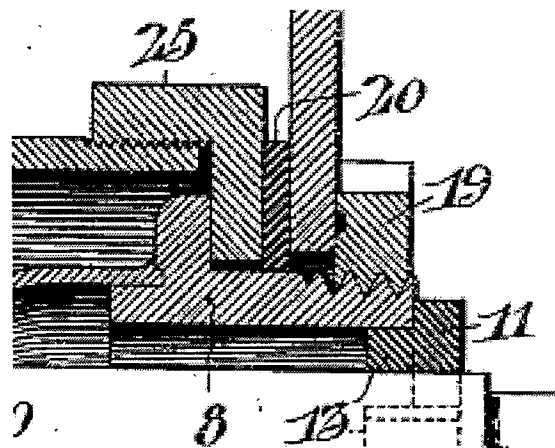
Relative to Figure 1, the specification teaches that “[a]ny destructive compression of the axial sealing lip 17 can be prevented by a limiting stop 23 on the sealing cuff.” (Specification at 7:19-20). A portion of Figure 1 is provided below, which illustrates the limiting stop 23.



Similarly, with respect to Figure 2, the specification teaches that “[a]ny destructive compression of the sealing lip 33 can be prevented by a limiting stop 38.” (Specification at 8:15-16). A portion of Figure 2 is provided below, which illustrates the limiting stop 38.



A premise of the rejection is that “[t]he inner diameter of body 25 is considered a limiting stop.” (OA at 3). This premise fails, however, because Roux teaches that “the stuffing box is held to the terminal box by a lock nut 19, and a gasket 20, makes a tight joint between the stuffing box and the terminal box.” (Roux, 2:81-84). A portion of Figure 4 is provided below, which illustrates nut 19, gasket 20 and the terminal box.



The inner diameter of body 25 may only restrict relative motion of the stuffing box 8. It has no capacity to limit compression of the gasket 20. Roux does not teach or suggest a limiting stop for preventing destructive compression of the gasket 20 or any seal. Rather, Roux illustrates that the female nut 19 may be threaded even further onto the male threads of the stuffing box 8

compress gasket 20 to its destruction. Thus, the invention as claimed in claim 18 is not anticipated by Roux. Claims 19 and 20 are patentable for similar reasons.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates Examiner's consideration and indication that Claims 2, 3, 5, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 21 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as set forth in the Office Action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has made an earnest effort to place this case in condition for allowance in light of the amendments and remarks set forth above. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims as amended.

Applicant believes there are no fees due at this time, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees necessary or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2148 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

If there are any matters concerning this Application that may be cleared up in a telephone conversation, please contact Applicant's attorney at 512.322.2690.

Respectfully submitted,
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